

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 9, and 10 are pending. Claims 1 and 9 have been amended. To clarify claim 1, the following phrases were added, "as a result ... said insert pipe" (for support, see, for example, the ABSTRACT), and "of said cylindrical main body" (for support, see, for example, Fig. 7 and page 15, lines 17-19). In claim 9 a typographical error resulted in the word "potion," which has been replaced with the correct word "portion." No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following detailed discussion.

Objections - Drawings

The Examiner has objected to the drawings under 37 C.F.R. § 1.83(a), asserting that the drawings fail to show the machining of the insert pipe and has objected to the specification under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(d) for not describing the machining of the insert pipe. However, the applicants find support for the machining of the insert pipe in various places in the specification, including page 14, lines 12-16, and page 17, lines 13-19, and do not believe that it is necessary to show such a machining process in the drawings.

Drawings are required only when the application "admits" of drawings. Generally, method cases are deemed to be of such a nature that drawings are not necessary for completeness. See *In re Hacklander*, 122 USPQ 278 (Comm'r) and MPEP §608.02. Since the language

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objected to relates to a method step that does not admit of a drawing, the drawings actually provided need not show the “machining” step set forth in original claim 3. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objection to the drawings.

Objections - Specification

The Specification title has been amended to “PLASTIC OPTICAL FIBER FERRULE,” so as to more clearly describe the currently claimed invention. No new matter has been introduced by these changes. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objection to the Specification.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner has rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement for the formation of the small-diameter portion by machining the insert pipe, which has not been described or shown. However, the applicants find support for the machining of the insert pipe in various places in the specification, including page 14, lines 12-16, and page 17, lines 13-19. It is not necessary to show such a machining process, as such processes are well known by those skilled in the art. The rejection of claim 3 should therefore be withdrawn.

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Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 9, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Bailey et al. (U.S. 4,461,539, hereinafter Bailey).

The applicants address these rejections as the rejections apply specifically to the amended independent claim 1, which recites the limitations of the cylindrical main body being insert molded around the insert pipe and the small-diameter tubular portion.

In contrast, the applicants find Bailey to be directed to a ferrule comprising a plastic main body defining a core wire receiving bore and a sheath receiving bore in a coaxial relationship, and a metallic sleeve that surrounds the plastic main body. Bailey's ferrule elements appear to be prepared as separate pieces that are simply combined with each other by using snap-fit and threaded engagements. Bailey's metallic sleeve is not an insert pipe in the sense the ferrule main body is insert molded around the insert pipe, as in the case of the claimed invention. After carefully studying Bailey, the applicants can find nowhere in Bailey where at least the above-stated limitations are taught or suggested.

Therefore, claim 1 and its dependent claims 9 and 10 are not anticipated by Bailey, as the inventions defined thereby are not identically disclosed in Bailey, as required by 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Consequently, the applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 9, and 10 of the present application are not anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102 by the Bailey patent, and that said claims should be allowed over Bailey. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration of claims 1, 9, and 10 is respectfully requested.

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In addition with regard to claim 9, the plastic reservoir recited therein provides a space for trapping the slag that is contained in the front end of the flow of the plastic material at the time of molding the cylindrical main body, which provides better performance characteristics (see page 5, line 22 to page 6, line 5). After carefully studying Bailey, the applicants can find nowhere in Bailey where at least the limitation of the plastic reservoir is taught or suggested. Bailey represents the type of technology the subject invention intends to replace. Claim 9 is patentable over Bailey for this additional reason.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bailey. The Examiner concedes that Bailey does not show “the formation of the small-diameter portion by machining the insert pipe.” However, the Examiner indicates that it is common knowledge to use such a method for forming the small-diameter portion by machining the insert pipe.

Since claim 1 is patentable over Bailey, as stated above in the response to the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of independent claim 1, from which claim 3 depends, then the dependent claim 3 is also patentable, at least on this basis. The Examiner concedes that Bailey does not teach the formation of the small-diameter portion by machining the insert, which the applicants teach is part of their discovery that provides benefits over other ferrules (see page 5, lines 1-6).

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The applicants submit that since the invention defined in claim 3 is not taught or suggested by Bailey, then claim 3 is patentable over this reference. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection of claim 3 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

For all the reasons described in the preceding paragraphs, the applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a timely action to that end is courteously solicited.

If the Examiner has any remaining questions or concerns, or would prefer claim language different from that included herein, the favor of a telephone call to the applicants' attorneys is requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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